



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy

Ninth Street Office Building / 8th Floor
202 North Ninth Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219-3402
(804) 692-3200 FAX (804) 692-3237
www.dmme.virginia.gov

For Immediate Release
October 1, 2007
Contact: Mike Abbott (276) 523-8146

Paramont Coal Corporation's Black Bear #4 Surface Mine Wins National Reclamation Award

Richmond, VA – A Russell County coal surface mine operated by Paramont Coal Company Virginia LLC recently received recognition from the National Association of State Land Reclamationists (NASLR), the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) announced today. Paramont's Black Bear #4 Mine received the NASLR national award for using innovative remining and forestry reclamation practices. DMME, a member of the NASLR, nominated the Black Bear #4 mine for the award.

Located about one-half mile south of Dante, VA, on Lick Creek, the Black Bear #4 operation mined six seams of coal via contour and auger mining methods and was reclaimed to a post mine land use of unmanaged forest and an industrial use for gas wells and pipelines. The mining process involved, in part, the remining of areas that had been extensively mined prior to the passage of the Federal Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977. This pre-law mining left exposed highwalls that were reclaimed by Paramont to current standards.

"Remining has proven itself to be an effective and viable means of addressing such abandoned mine land (AML) problems that due to their lower reclamation priority ranking under the AML Program criteria might never have been reclaimed," said DMME Division of Mined Land Reclamation Director Bradley "Butch" Lambert. "The mining at the Black Bear reclaimed 202 acres of abandoned mine land while contributing additional reclamation taxes to Virginia's AML fund."

Lambert also praised Paramont's commitment to the Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative (ARRI). "The forestry reclamation approach developed by the ARRI has shown that proper tree-planting techniques can result in the successful cultivation of valuable native hardwoods on surface mine land," said Lambert. Paramont planted 147,417 trees on 251 acres of

- M O R E -

mined land including such species as chestnut oak, white oak, northern red oak, sycamore, green ash, sawtooth oak, locust, redbud, dogwood, white pine and Virginia pine.

Trees provide a multitude of benefits to mined lands including soil stabilization, wildlife habitat, recreational activities and possible future revenue to landowners. The Black Bear #4 mine demonstrated that remining and reforestation provide a winning combination by reclaiming abandoned mine land to current standards at no cost to Virginia's AML Program and growing native trees to enhance the environment and provide a valuable renewable resource.

The [National Association of State Land Reclamationists](#) (NASLR) is composed of about 25 states and provinces with regulatory programs dedicated to restoring lands and waters affected by mining. As a nationally recognized authority on the reclamation of mined lands, NASLR advocates research, innovative technology and professional discourse to foster the restoration environmental resources. NASLR promotes lasting partnerships among state land reclamationists, private mining groups and other interested parties to endorse and sponsor programs that advance the art and science of land reclamation.

#